

Senate Resolution 210

By: Senator Mullis of the 53rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the dentists of Georgia and recognizing their day at the state capitol on
2 February 20, 2019; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the dentists of this state are respected civic leaders and business owners within
4 their communities who believe that removing barriers to dental care and educating the public
5 on the benefits of proper oral health are critical for maintaining the overall health of
6 Georgia's citizens; and

7 WHEREAS, the prevention of dental disease is also a way to prevent complications for
8 pregnant women and diabetic patients; and

9 WHEREAS, good oral health can also positively impact a person's confidence and enhance
10 a person's prospects for gainful employment; and

11 WHEREAS, every February is designated as Children's Dental Health Month, during which
12 members of the Georgia Dental Association (the "GDA") provide free oral health instruction
13 and educational activities to pre-K and school-aged children throughout the state of Georgia;

14 WHEREAS, as part of Children's Dental Health Month, one day is designated as Give Kids
15 a Smile Day, which in 2018 provided more than \$100,000.00 in free, donated dental services
16 and oral health education to underserved children throughout Georgia; and

17 WHEREAS, each year, GDA members provide free dental health services at the Georgia
18 Special Olympics State Summer Games and State Master's Bowling Tournament; and

19 WHEREAS, on August 10 and 11, 2018, the GDA's Foundation for Oral Health hosted a
20 Mission of Mercy at the James Brown Arena in Augusta, Georgia, where over 1,800
21 low-income and underserved adults from across the state received free dental treatment from

22 thousands of volunteer dentists and dental health professionals performing nearly 9,200
23 procedures with a donated value of care of almost \$1.5 million; and

24 WHEREAS, the GDA established a statewide Donated Dental Services Program in July 2016
25 to provide free, comprehensive dental treatment and labs for Georgia adults with disabilities
26 or who are elderly or medically fragile, which provided over \$1.5 million in total donated
27 dental treatment with an average value of \$5,400.00 in donated care per patient to date; and

28 WHEREAS, in 2018, the GDA created its Prescribe with Care initiative to educate its
29 members on the opioid abuse epidemic in the State of Georgia, which included creating and
30 offering continuing education courses for dentists on safe and effective prescribing for dental
31 pain using non-opioid alternatives, administrative rulemaking with the Georgia Board of
32 Dentistry requiring mandatory opioid prescriber continuing education, participation in
33 statewide task forces, and formally endorsing the American Dental Association's Statement
34 on the Use of Opioids in the Treatment of Dental Pain; and

35 WHEREAS, in 2018, the GDA, together with the Georgia Department of Public Health, and
36 Dental College of Georgia-Augusta University, created a Dental Adjunct Professor Program,
37 through which dental students may serve a clinical rotation treating patients in Georgia
38 public health clinics located in rural and underserved parts of Georgia under the supervision
39 of a GDA member dentist, who shall serve as adjunct faculty for the dental school; and

40 WHEREAS, Georgia licensed dentists and members of the GDA consistently volunteer in
41 the free and charitable dental clinics located throughout the state and also provide free
42 treatment in their offices to underserved and low-income patients; and

43 WHEREAS, this state recognizes the members of the GDA for their long-standing
44 commitment and dedication to promoting the oral health of all of Georgia's citizens and
45 protecting the safety of their patients.

46 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
47 join in recognizing Wednesday, February 20, 2019 as Dentist's Day at the state capitol; that
48 Friday, February 22, 2019 is Give-Kids-a Smile Day in Georgia; that the entire month of
49 February is Children's Dental Health Month in Georgia; and recognize the valuable role
50 played by the GDA and the thousands of licensed dentists in this state who help remove
51 barriers to dental care by volunteering their services.

52 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
53 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and press.